



2006 Underage Drinking Prevention: **Town Hall Meetings Planning Guide**

**START TALKING
BEFORE THEY
START DRINKING**

www.stopalcoholabuse.gov



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
www.samhsa.gov



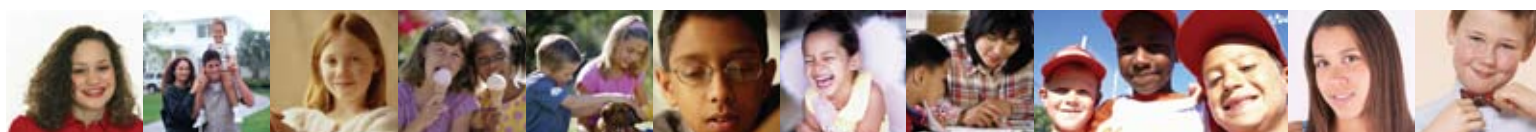
Alcohol is the most widely used substance of abuse among America's youth. A higher percentage of youth aged 12 to 20 use alcohol (29%) than use tobacco (24%) or illicit drugs (14%), making underage drinking a leading public health problem in the United States. It is illegal in all fifty States to sell alcohol to youth under the age of 21; however, in some States it may be legally provided to youth in special circumstances such as religious ceremonies, in private residences, or in the presence of a parent or guardian. Nevertheless underage youth find it relatively easy to acquire alcohol, often from adults. Underage alcohol use has proven to be a complex, persistent social problem that has resisted an easy solution even as new research over the past decade has increased our understanding of how underage alcohol use threatens the immediate and long-term well-being of the individual and others.

As part of a national effort to prevent underage drinking, the Interagency Coordinating Committee on the Prevention of Underage Drinking (ICCPUD), which is chaired by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Administrator Charles G. Curie, is sponsoring a series of Town Hall Meetings in communities across America on or around March 28, 2006. These Town Hall Meetings are designed to alert and empower the community as well as generate interest from the media. They will increase community understanding of underage drinking and its consequences, and provide an opportunity for communities to discuss how they can best address the problem.

To help educate young people and caring adults about the risks associated with underage drinking, SAMHSA, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and Scholastic Inc. have collaborated since 2002 to provide school-based underage drinking prevention materials in time for Alcohol Awareness Month each April. In March 2006, Reach Out Now (RON) materials will be provided to every fifth- and sixth-grade class in the United States. Communities holding Town Hall Meetings are encouraged to use these materials in their schools, as well as resources from other ICCPUD agencies. In coordination with RON, Reach Out Now Teach-Ins will be held nationwide during the week of April 3–7 to reinforce the message to the Nation's youth to reject alcohol.

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The samples are presented in template format. They include blanks in which you can insert the most relevant local information. Use the samples as guides as you develop your own materials. You can either adapt them to include information about your own community or use them as written. Electronic versions of all text in this paragraph may be downloaded from the enclosed CD and www.stopalcoholabuse.gov.





Underage Drinking Prevention: Town Hall Meetings

Teams of government officials from the States, territories, and the District of Columbia convened in the fall of 2005 in Washington, DC, to address the serious problem of underage drinking. Participants received the latest evidence-based information on the scope and consequences of underage drinking as well as strategies for addressing the issue. The State teams used their time at the meeting to evaluate how they currently address the issue and consider how they could strengthen their efforts based on the new information presented. The teams also had the opportunity to plan their participation in a nationwide series of town hall-style meetings to take place in communities across America in March 2006.

Purpose of the Town Hall Meetings

Thanks to new research, we know more now than ever about the risks associated with underage drinking. The Town Hall Meetings are part of a national effort to increase the understanding of underage drinking and its consequences, and to encourage individuals, families, and communities to address the problem. The meetings will provide an opportunity for communities to learn more about the new research on the issue, and to discuss how their community can best prevent underage alcohol use. These Town Hall Meetings are designed to alert and empower the community as well as generate interest from the media. The entire community can be educated about:

- The dangers of underage drinking
- The impact of underage drinking on the community
- The importance of preventative steps for fifth and sixth graders
- The value of parents discussing the issue with their children
- How preventing underage drinking can reduce its negative outcomes, such as injuries and death from alcohol-related crashes.
- Other steps the community can take to reduce the demand for, the availability of, and access to alcohol by persons under the age of 21.

Who Can Participate?

Anyone can! Since underage drinking is a critical health and safety issue, it is important to involve representatives from the entire community, including parents, youth, education, substance abuse prevention, other health entities, justice/law enforcement, highway safety, alcohol control, local government, and business.

When Will the Meetings Be Held?

Communities are being encouraged to host their Town Hall Meetings on, or as close possible to, March 28, 2006. Holding the meetings at the same time across the country will create a national event that can draw local and national press attention to this important issue. However, due to local circumstances, some communities may need to hold their meeting at another time.





Resources

All participating communities will receive guidelines on how to hold Town Hall Meetings, a DVD containing a presentation on the extent of the problem and possible solutions, a facilitator's guide, and information handouts.

Who Is Sponsoring the Town Hall Meetings?

The Town Hall Meetings are being sponsored by the Interagency Coordinating Committee on the Prevention of Underage Drinking, which consists of the Administration for Children and Families, Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Federal Trade Commission, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools, Office of the Surgeon General, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, and Office of National Drug Control Policy.

To learn more, please visit www.stopalcoholabuse.gov or contact us at 240-747-4980 or StopAlcoholAbuse@shs.net.

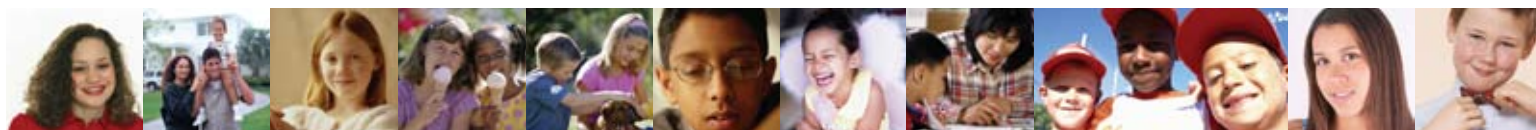
First Steps

First, you should decide what kind of Town Hall Meeting you want to have. This will depend on how large and complex an event you want to hold. The following are three examples to help you make that decision. Please note that these are just examples—the activities are interchangeable, and you might want to include or omit certain activities mentioned in this guide.

Sample Events

Simple event:

- Combine your meeting with a community event such as a PTA meeting.
- Include adults and/or youths.
- Hold the event in a school gymnasium or auditorium.
- Limit the event to an hour or hour and a half.
- Prepare a media advisory or press release to encourage media coverage.
- Involve mayors and other public officials, police and health representatives, faith-based organizations, etc.





Intermediate event:

- Combine the meeting with another community event or make the meeting a separate event. The meeting can be held in a school gymnasium or in another location such as a restaurant, local library, or Regional Alcohol and Drug Awareness Resource (RADAR) Network facility.
- Invite key community officials, such as mayors and law enforcement representatives.
- Use the media kit as a guide to help reach out to the media and encourage press coverage.
- Involve mayors and other public officials, police and health representatives, faith-based organizations, etc.

Complex event:

- Make the meeting a separate event, possibly in a hotel ballroom, school auditorium, local library meeting room, or a RADAR Network facility.
- Prepare flyers or mailings to reach out to the entire community.
- Use the media kit as a guide to help reach out to the media and encourage press coverage.
- Videotape the meeting.
- Involve mayors and other public officials, police and health representatives, faith-based organizations, etc.
- Prepare handouts for meeting participants.
- Offer snacks or light refreshments.
- Identify and plan meeting followup.
- Organize a post-meeting reception.
- Identify and network with opinion leaders to further disseminate information.
- Discuss a possible community plan and how it might rollout.

Getting Started

Once you have decided on the kind of Town Hall Meeting you want to host, it's time to begin. First, identify and enlist a small group of people who are motivated to work—and who can make things happen—to be part of a planning committee. Forming partnerships with local organizations or businesses is an important way to increase the visibility of your Town Hall Meeting. The following are suggestions to help make your planning committee a success.

- ☐ Hold planning committee meetings at times and places convenient for everyone.
- ☐ Have an agenda for every meeting so you can focus on getting the work done.
- ☐ In each meeting, introduce the attendees and thank them for coming.
- ☐ Make sure all attendees sign in with phone number, address, and e-mail. Even if some people cannot attend the meetings, they can write letters or make phone calls.
- ☐ Choose someone to take notes and keep track of the key points.
- ☐ Make sure every volunteer has a specific role and assigned tasks.
- ☐ Keep a record of everything you do.





The planning committee is responsible for making the Town Hall Meeting happen, and they will need to consider a number of factors in their planning process. Below is a checklist to help the committee plan the meeting:

Getting Started Checklist:

- ☐ Define the purpose of the Town Hall Meeting.
- ☐ Choose one person to lead the meeting. Try to find someone with knowledge of local problems with underage drinking. See the Facilitator's Guide (Appendix B) for tips to help you select a moderator.
- ☐ Identify faith-based and community agencies and organizations to co-sponsor the event. Define their responsibilities.
- ☐ Ask people in relevant agencies and organizations to serve on a planning committee.
- ☐ Identify people to help build momentum: legislators, parents, local leaders, and teachers.
- ☐ Put together the planning committee. Keep it to no more than 10 to 12 people. Make subcommittees for panelists and the moderator, if desired.
- ☐ Develop a program budget and a timeline for accomplishing all tasks.
- ☐ Begin brainstorming ways to spread the underage drinking prevention message, such as through public service announcements (PSAs). For downloadable PSAs and additional information about underage drinking, visit www.stopalcoholabuse.gov.

Planning the Town Hall Meeting

Planning committee members play an important role in ensuring that the meeting runs smoothly. They will need to decide where and when the meeting is held, who will present and what their focus will be, and what type of media coverage will be most effective for their purposes.

It is important to stay on top of the various tasks well before the event. The following items should be considered as you plan the event. Each of these will help keep the focus of the Town Hall Meeting on preventing underage drinking.

Planning Committee Checklist:

Logistics:

- ☐ Find a rent-free office location to prepare mailings and make phone calls.
- ☐ Select a date, time, and duration for the Town Hall Meeting.
- ☐ Decide how many people will be invited to the event.
- ☐ Reserve a rent-free hall with seating for the desired number of people. Keep in mind your location will determine the type of audience you will attract.
- ☐ Reserve an area for media members and determine whether they will have any equipment needs, such as risers or a mult box for camera crews.
- ☐ Determine how to handle any necessary post-meeting cleanup.





Participants:

- ☐ Identify a list of invitees (e.g., city, county, State, Federal legislators, and/or nonprofits).
- ☐ Choose a moderator to explain the purpose of the meeting, identify sponsors, introduce VIPs and speakers/panelists, and serve as timekeeper.
- ☐ Identify and invite VIPs and people to serve on the panel.
- ☐ Determine the amount of time for each speaker's presentation.
- ☐ Contact VIPs, speakers, and sponsors to make sure they know the schedule and how long they may speak.

Promotion:

- ☐ Plan and implement a marketing strategy.
- ☐ Prepare a press release. (See media sample in Appendix A)
- ☐ Send out an advisory to the media (see the media sample in Appendix A) and make followup calls to ensure that the event is on their calendars and that they will attend.

Materials:

- ☐ Prepare a sample pitch letter and letter of invitation. (See media samples in Appendix A)
- ☐ Decide how much of your budget to allocate for flyers, mailings, and other materials.
- ☐ Provide content to the moderator and prepare talking points for panelists, using SAMHSA's Start Talking Before They Start Drinking materials on www.stopalcoholabuse.gov as a resource. The downloadable Start Talking Before They Start Drinking brochure also would be a useful handout for parents.
- ☐ Prepare a program handout, including an agenda, for the Town Hall Meeting.
- ☐ Prepare a fact sheet with statistics on underage drinking or a flyer to mail or hand out at the town hall meeting, using information available in Key Facts (p. 13) as well as www.stopalcoholabuse.gov
- ☐ Decide if there are other relevant materials that could be made available as handouts to participants. If so, order them in advance.
- ☐ Have registration sheets for attendees, speakers, and media.
- ☐ Have an agenda that includes the names of the VIPs and sponsors.
- ☐ Obtain signed releases if a photo, audiotape, videotape, or report is used.
- ☐ Consider showing a video or film clip on underage drinking to generate discussion. (You can use the enclosed DVD.)
- ☐ Decide whether a report, summary, or other product will come out of the meeting.

Additional meeting details:

- ☐ Decide whether questions to or from the panelists will be allowed.
- ☐ Identify and plan a meeting followup.
- ☐ Determine if video- or audiotaping will be done and how these methods will be used to extend the reach of the event.
- ☐ Decide on snacks and light refreshments.
- ☐ Organize a post-meeting reception.





The Day of the Town Hall Meeting

- ☐ Arrive early to make sure the room is set up properly.
- ☐ Greet participants and show them to their seats.
- ☐ Steer media to the reserved section.
- ☐ Start on time and keep the panel moving.

After the Town Hall Meeting

- ☐ Send out a press release describing the meeting and mentioning speakers and the number of attendees. (See media sample in Appendix A)
- ☐ Make sure to follow up with the media representatives who attended.
- ☐ Write thank-you letters to the VIPs.
- ☐ Develop and distribute a report on the meeting.
- ☐ Follow up with agencies and organizations and get their feedback.
- ☐ Follow up with long-term activities that provide a continued emphasis on preventing underage drinking in the community.
- ☐ Use PSAs to further the underage drinking prevention message. Print, radio, and television PSAs, as well as a downloadable brochure to help parents open a discussion with their children, are available through SAMHSA's Start Talking Before They Start Drinking Ad Council campaign on www.stopalcoholabuse.gov.

Then, give yourself a pat on the back—you've made a contribution to the prevention of underage drinking!





Using the Media Samples in This Package

The media, such as local newspapers and radio and television stations, is an excellent tool for sharing information with large audiences. An important part of a media organization's mandate is to be of public service. Thus, the media should welcome an opportunity to address the problem of underage drinking. Your goal in reaching parents, caregivers, and others through the media should be to encourage conversations in families, schools, and communities about preventing underage drinking.

Create or use a developed list of media contacts who cover stories about health, substance abuse, and education. Don't overlook community newspapers as potential outlets for raising awareness about your Town Hall Meeting and its message. In addition, local faith-based organizations and youth-related groups may publish their own newsletters and be eager to support your Town Hall Meeting objectives.

NOTE: In working with reporters, remember that they are frequently on deadline and may not return messages quickly. Be sensitive to their time constraints. Be patient, but persistent. Your Town Hall Meeting is an important opportunity for the community to discuss the problem of underage drinking and to share ideas for preventing young people from using alcohol.

How to Use a Media Advisory

Media members are more responsive to requests for space or airtime when they receive information about a local issue in a ready-to-use format and style. A media advisory alerts the media to your upcoming Town Hall Meeting, providing just enough information to encourage reporters to attend and cover the event.

An advisory includes only the highlights of your event in outline form: who, what, where, when, why, contact information, and interview opportunities. When selecting a contact person, remember that this individual must be available to take calls in advance and on the day of the event. Include a short paragraph with helpful background information. Lead off your media advisory, as well as other information you submit to the media, with an informative and catchy title to draw attention to your message. The intent is to get the reporter to cover your Town Hall Meeting. For television reporters, be sure to mention any great visuals they will be able to capture at the event.

Send the advisory a week in advance of your Town Hall Meeting so reporters can schedule coverage.

A sample media advisory is located in Appendix A.





How to Use a Pitch Letter

A personal approach can make all the difference in getting media coverage for your Town Hall Meeting. A pitch letter is an effective way to garner media coverage. More informal than a press release and more substantial than a media advisory, the pitch letter gives a reporter both a story idea and information needed to get started. Your pitch letter should include a brief description of your Town Hall Meeting and key facts underlining its importance to your community and to children's health. Include a contact name and telephone number to make it easy for the reporter to get more information.

Send pitch letters a week in advance of your event. Make followup calls to be sure the reporters received your information and to encourage coverage.

A sample pitch letter is located in Appendix A.

How to Use a Press Release

A press release, one to two pages in length, provides complete information the media can use to write a story on your event. The general format for a press release includes an introductory paragraph providing the "who, what, when, where, and why" of an event—in other words, all of the essential information. The next one or two paragraphs contain supporting information. Quotes by key local leaders or individuals involved in the Town Hall Meeting can make this information more lively and interesting. The final paragraph generally describes the sponsoring organizations. When issuing your press release, use printed letterhead. Mark the end of each page with "-more-" and the end of the final page with "-30-" or "###."

Press releases are delivered to the media the day of your Town Hall Meeting.

A sample press release is located in Appendix A.

How to Use a PSA

PSAs are messages the media broadcasts or prints free of charge to serve the public good. Most media outlets have public service directors who handle requests for PSA placement.

The print PSAs included in Appendix E of this guide are part of SAMHSA's Start Talking Before They Start Drinking Ad Council public service campaign. Details about this campaign and its downloadable materials, which also include radio and television PSAs and a community kit, can be found at www.stopalcoholabuse.gov.





In addition, the print PSAs included in this guide can be localized at no charge through the Ad Council by contacting Dzu Bui at 212-984-1935 or dbui@adcouncil.org. Organizations must meet certain criteria before the Ad Council will localize these PSAs. Specific criteria include:

- Organization must be a government agency or a nonprofit organization registered as a 501(c)(3), not a profit-making entity.
- Organization and its Web site must be non-commercial, non-denominational, and non-partisan.
- Organization must have the capacity to respond to inquiries within 2 business days without cost to individuals.
- Organization must have the capacity to provide or make local referrals for treatment at a caller's request.

Start Talking Before They Start Drinking print PSAs are located in Appendix E.





Key Facts

- Approximately 10.8 million persons ages 12 to 20 (28.7 percent) report drinking alcohol during the month prior to the survey interview in 2004. Among children aged 12 to 17, an estimated 17.6 percent were current drinkers.¹
- Among youths aged 12 to 17, an estimated 17.6 percent used alcohol in the month prior to the survey interview in 2004.²
- Alcohol use among children and adolescents starts early and increases rapidly with age.³ Alcohol use by the end of the sixth grade is reported by 20.9 percent of eighth graders in 2004. More than three out of every four students (77 percent) have consumed alcohol (more than a few sips) by the end of high school; and nearly half (44 percent) have done so by the eighth grade. In fact, 60 percent of 12th graders and one-fifth (20 percent) of eighth graders reported in 2004 having been drunk at least once in their life.⁴
- Adults who had first used alcohol before age 15 are five times as likely to be dependent on alcohol as adults who first used at age 21 or older.⁵ In fact, more than one-quarter (2.0 million) of alcohol-dependent adults, age 21 or older, first used alcohol before age 14.⁶ About eighty percent, 5.5 million, first used before they were age 18. Ninety-five percent, 6.6 million, first used before age 21.⁷

¹ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2005). Results from the 2004 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: National Findings (NSDUH Series H-25), DHHS Publication No. SMA-05-4062, Rockville, MD.

² Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2005). Results from the 2004 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: National Findings (NSDUH Series H-25), DHHS Publication No. SMA-05-4062, Rockville, MD.

³ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2005). Results from the 2004 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: National Findings (NSDUH Series H-25), DHHS Publication No. SMA-05-4062, Rockville, MD.

⁴ Johnston, L.D., O'Malley, P.M., Bachman, J.G., and Schulenberg, J.E. (2005). Monitoring the Future: National Results on Adolescent Drug Use: Key Findings, 2004. (NIH Publication No. 05-5726). National Institute on Drug Abuse. Bethesda, MD.

⁵ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2005). Results from the 2004 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: National Findings (NSDUH Series H-25), DHHS Publication No. SMA-05-4062, Rockville, MD.

⁶ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2005). Results from the 2004 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: National Findings (NSDUH Series H-25), DHHS Publication No. SMA-05-4062, Rockville, MD.

⁷ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2005). Results from the 2004 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: National Findings (NSDUH Series H-25), DHHS Publication No. SMA-05-4062, Rockville, MD.





- Underage alcohol use is more likely to kill young people than all illegal drugs combined.^{8,9}
- Ten percent of 9- to 10-year-olds say that they already have started drinking alcohol.¹⁰
- Perceived parental disapproval is the strongest influence on youthful alcohol use. Children who believe their parents would strongly disapprove of their using a particular substance are less likely to do so than those whose parents somewhat disapprove or neither approve or disapprove.¹¹
- Parental involvement is another important factor. In 2004, substance use was lower among youths who report that their parents always or sometimes engaged in monitoring behaviors (helping children with homework, limiting television and time out with friends on school nights, requiring them to do chores, etc.) than among youths whose parents seldom or never involved.¹²

⁸Grunbaum, J.A., Kann, L., Kinchen, S.A., et al. (2002). Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance: United States, 2001. MMWR: Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report 51(SSO 4): 1-62.

⁹Corley, R.P., Stallings, M.C., et al. (2002). Substance Use, Abuse and Dependence in Adolescence: Prevalence, Symptom Profiles, and Correlates.

¹⁰Donovan, J.E. (2004). Adolescent Alcohol Initiation: A Review of Psychosocial Risk Factors. Journal of Adolescent Health 35:529.e7-18.

¹¹Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2005). Results from the 2004 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: National Findings (NSDUH Series H-25), DHHS Publication No. SMA-05-4062, Rockville, MD.

¹²Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2005). Results from the 2004 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: National Findings (NSDUH Series H-25), DHHS Publication No. SMA-05-4062, Rockville, MD.





Appendix A: Sample Panelist Invitation Letter, Sample Media Advisory, Sample Pitch Letter, and Sample Press Release





Sample Panelist Invitation Letter

[Date]
[Name]
[Title]
[Organization]
[Address 1]
[Address 2]
[City, State, ZIP]

Dear [Salutation] [Last Name]:

Alcohol use among children and adolescents starts early and increases rapidly with age. A higher percentage of youth aged 12 to 20 use alcohol (29%) than use tobacco (24%) or illicit drugs (14%), making underage drinking a leading public health problem in the United States. To help educate young people and caring adults about the risks associated with underage drinking, the Federal government's Interagency Coordinating Committee for the Prevention of Underage Drinking (ICCPUD) is supporting a series of Town Hall Meetings to take place in communities across America on or around March 28, 2006.

[Community] is planning a Town Hall Meeting in our area on [Date and time] at [Location]. This meeting will give us the opportunity to educate parents, teachers, officials, youth, and other community members about the impact of underage drinking and will allow us to develop possible solutions.

As an organization committed to preventing underage drinking, [Name of your organization] is inviting you to lend your expertise by being a presenter at our Town Hall Meeting on [date]. We will provide you with talking points that you can use during the [Length of time] presentation. With participation from prominent local spokespersons, we hope to raise awareness of the risks of underage drinking and to encourage broader use of the many resources that are available to youth, parents, schools, and communities. Media will also be encouraged to cover this Town Hall Meeting.

I will follow up in a few days to inquire about whether you would be willing to serve on the panel, or you may contact [Name of representative from your organization] at [Phone number] or via e-mail at [Contact person's email address].

We hope you will join us in educating our community about the importance of preventing underage drinking.

Sincerely,
[Name]
[Title]





Sample Media Advisory

Underage Drinking Prevention: National Town Halls Meetings

[Name of Your Organization]

For Immediate Release

[Date]

Contact: [Your Organization]

[Spokesperson]

_____ (day)

_____ (evening)

_____ (e-mail)

[Community] To Come Together for Town Hall Meeting on Underage Drinking

[Insert local statistic]

[Community name] in [City], [State], is one of hundreds of communities nationwide that will hold an Underage Drinking Prevention: National Town Hall Meeting on [Date] to discuss and raise awareness about the issue of underage drinking. [Your organization], in collaboration with the Federal government's Interagency Coordinating Committee for the Prevention of Underage Drinking is sponsoring the event. Parents, teachers, officials, youth, and other community members will be educated about the impact that underage drinking has on the community, and they will develop possible ways to address this issue.

New data show that approximately 29 percent of youth ages 12 to 20 have used alcohol illegally. By the time they reach eighth grade, 41 percent of adolescents have had at least one drink, and almost 20 percent report having been "drunk."

[Insert any additional local statistics]

What: Underage Drinking Prevention: National Town Hall Meeting

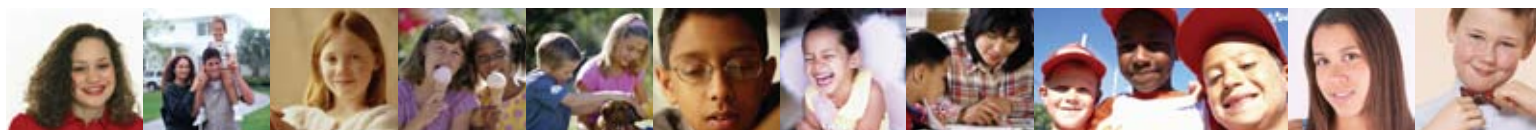
When: [Date] at [Time]

Where: [Address]

Who: [Spokesperson]

[Title]

After the meeting, [Guest spokesperson], [Community representative], and [Your organization's representative] will be available for interviews.





Sample Pitch Letter

[Name of editor]

[Title]

[Name of news organization]

[Address]

Dear [Name]:

Alcohol use among children and adolescents starts early and increases rapidly with age. A higher percentage of youth aged 12 to 20 use alcohol (29%) than use tobacco (24%) or illicit drugs (14%), making underage drinking a leading public health problem in the United States. To help educate young people and caring adults about the risks associated with underage drinking, the Federal government's Interagency Coordinating Committee for the Prevention of Underage Drinking (ICCPUD) is supporting a series of Town Hall Meetings to take place in communities across America on or around March 28, 2006. [Insert local statistics]

Among young people, the prevalence of underage drinking increases with age, making it more important than ever to begin teaching youth at an early age about the dangers of alcohol. On [Date] at [Time], [Your organization] and [Guest spokesperson] will be sponsoring an Underage Drinking Prevention: National Town Hall Meeting at [Location] to raise awareness of the risks of underage drinking. The Town Hall Meeting is a national effort by ICCPUD to inform youth, parents, caregivers, and other adults about the harmful effects of underage drinking.

Please attend our Town Hall Meeting to help increase community awareness of the dangers of alcohol use by our youth. Children in our community need to know how to reject underage drinking and how damaging underage drinking can be to their health, now and in the future.

Spokespeople will be available for interviews either before or after the event. I would be pleased to put you in touch with them.

Sincerely,

[Your name]

[Your title]

[Your phone number]

[Your e-mail address]





Sample Press Release

For Immediate Release
[Date]

Contact: [Your Organization]
[Spokesperson]
____ (day)
____ (evening)
____ (e-mail)

[Community] Comes Together for Town Hall Meeting on Underage Drinking

[Insert local statistics]

[Your community, date]

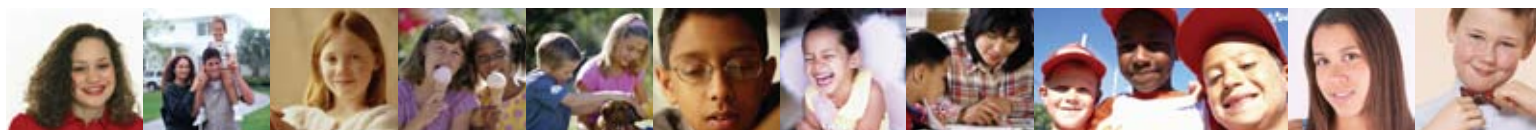
Today [Community name] in [City], [State], became one of hundreds of communities nationwide that held a Town Hall Meeting to alert the community to new research on the risks of underage drinking and empower the community to take action to stop it. The Federal government's Interagency Coordinating Committee for the Prevention of Underage Drinking (ICCPUD) is supporting Town Hall Meetings that are taking place in communities across America on or around March 28, 2006.

The Town Hall Meeting educated parents, teachers, officials, youth, and other community members about the impact underage drinking has on the community. Together, they discussed possible ways to address the issue.

Underage drinking is an important community concern. New data show that 29 percent of the nation's youth ages 12 to 20 have used alcohol illegally. [Insert local statistics or a story to reinforce the message (e.g., the number of underage drinkers involved in traffic crashes or other community events tied to Alcohol Awareness Month).]

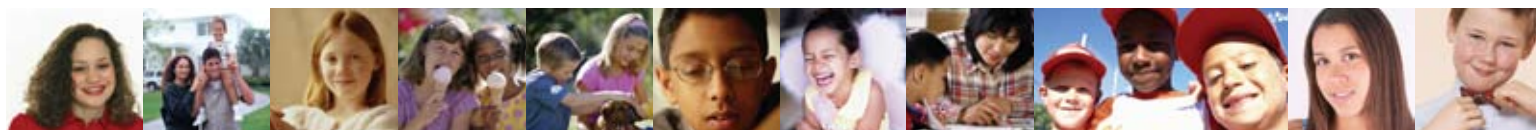
Research indicates that families exert a great deal of influence on whether a child uses alcohol later in life. "What parents may not realize," says Charles G. Curie, Chairman of ICCPUD and Administrator of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), "is that children say that their parents' disapproval of underage drinking is the key reason they have chosen not to drink."

SAMHSA reports that children and teens are less likely to abuse alcohol if parents are involved in their children's lives, make and enforce clear rules, and are positive role models.





Appendix B: Facilitator's Guide





Underage Drinking Prevention: National Town Halls

Facilitator's Guide

The facilitator of your Town Hall Meeting plays a critical role in the success of the event. This person must keep the meeting on track and encourage the flow of ideas and discussions among participants. Keep the following points in mind when selecting a facilitator for your Town Hall Meeting.

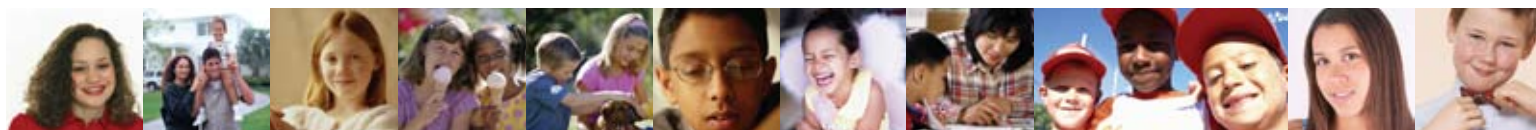
The Facilitator Should:

- ☐ Know the subject matter well (i.e., be knowledgeable on the topic of underage alcohol use).
- ☐ Have strong communication skills, which include speaking and listening well.
- ☐ Be tactful, particularly when faced with controversial questions or disruptions.
- ☐ Decide when to move on to another point/topic and when to allow a discussion to continue.
- ☐ Engage the audience.
- ☐ Encourage audience participation.
- ☐ Keep the meeting focused on the agreed-upon subject.

Once the facilitator has been identified, explain the specific role this person will play in the success of the Town Hall Meeting. Provide the following checklist to the facilitator to help him or her prepare for the meeting.

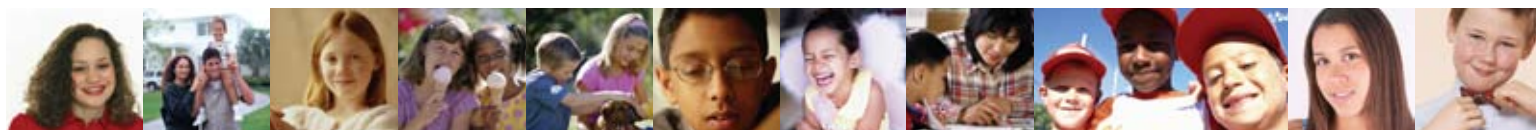
The Facilitator's Role:

- ☐ Introduce the problem of underage alcohol use and any specific related issues that will be discussed in the meeting.
- ☐ Explain the format (e.g., will participants be encouraged to ask questions throughout panel discussions, or will they be asked to hold questions and comments until the end?).
- ☐ Introduce panelists.
- ☐ Ask questions of the panelists that will reinforce the importance of preventing underage alcohol use (e.g., ask a law enforcement representative about the legal implications of underage alcohol use).
- ☐ Determine the length of time allowed per panelist to answer each question.
- ☐ Have a pre-set timeframe for the panel discussion.
- ☐ Begin a question and answer (Q&A) period with the other participants, providing a microphone if needed.
- ☐ Have a pre-set timeframe for the Q&A period.
- ☐ During the Q&A period, take questions from the audience and direct them to the appropriate panelist.
- ☐ Wrap up the meeting by summarizing the key points discussed, identifying next steps, and thanking panelists and audience members for their participation.
- ☐ Facilitate interviews between the media and the panelists or other spokespeople. Some of these interviews may occur before the meeting.
- ☐ Have a pre-set timeframe for media interviews.





Appendix C: Talking Points for PowerPoint Presentation





Underage Drinking Prevention: Town Hall Meetings Talking Points

For Use with the PowerPoint Presentation included in the CD-Rom.

These talking points can be used for presentations and discussion about planning a Town Hall Meeting to discuss underage drinking prevention. A “slide icon” and the corresponding slide number indicate where talking points appear as PowerPoint slides. Talking points contain more information than the PowerPoint slides. By using the talking points in conjunction with the PowerPoint Presentation, your presentation will be more fact-filled and persuasive. Share a copy of these important talking points with everyone in your coalition who will be helping to plan your Town Hall Meeting. (Please note: These talking points have also been incorporated into the PowerPoint presentation in the Notes Section.)

(Opening Title) Underage Drinking Prevention: Town Hall Meetings

☐ Slide 1

State of the Problem

☐ Slide 2

- Alcohol use among children and adolescents starts early and increases rapidly with age. (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. [2005]. Results from the 2004 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: National Findings [Office of Applied Studies, NSDUH Series H-28, DHHS Publication No. SMA-05-4062]. Rockville, MD.)
- Alcohol use by the end of sixth grade was reported by 20.9 percent of eighth graders in 2004. More than three out of every four students (77 percent) have consumed alcohol (more than a few sips) by the end of high school, and nearly half (44 percent) have done so by the eighth grade. (Johnston, L.D., O'Malley, P.M., Bachman, J.G., and Schulenberg, J.E. [2005]. Monitoring the Future: National Results on Adolescent Drug Use: Key Findings, 2004. [NIH Publication No. 05-5726] National Institute on Drug Abuse, Bethesda, MD.) (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. [2005]. Results from the 2004 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: National Findings [Office of Applied Studies, NSDUH Series H-28, DHHS Publication No. SMA-05-4062]. Rockville, MD.)
- Perceived parental disapproval is the strongest influence on youthful alcohol use. Children who believe their parents would strongly disapprove of their using a particular substance are less likely to do so than those whose parents somewhat disapprove or neither approve nor disapprove. (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. [2005]. Results from the 2004 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: National Findings [Office of Applied Studies, NSDUH Series H-28, DHHS Publication No. SMA-05-4062]. Rockville, MD.)

Underage Drinking Prevention: Town Hall Meetings

☐ Slide 3

- In 2006, for the first year ever, Town Hall Meetings will take place all over America to gather together communities in order to raise awareness and talk about the issue of underage drinking.





What Is a Town Hall Meeting?

☐ Slide 4

- A Town Hall Meeting is an opportunity for a community to:
 - Discuss a topic and its impact on the community.
 - Educate its members on the subject.
 - Encourage action.
- A Town Hall Meeting brings together politicians, teachers, business owners, service providers, faith-based and community leaders, and parents in a venue where an issue of concern can be discussed publicly.
- In this case, the prevention of underage drinking is of prime interest to every community.

Why Hold a Town Hall Meeting?

☐ Slide 5

- A Town Hall Meeting can:
 - Raise awareness in the community about underage drinking and its risks.
 - Encourage community involvement in preventing underage drinking by making people aware of current efforts and suggesting ways to become involved.
- Encourage community officials to work together to determine effective ways of preventing underage drinking.
- Generate interest from the press.

Why Hold a Town Hall Meeting? (cont.)

☐ Slide 6

- The whole community can learn about:
 - The dangers of underage drinking.
 - The impact of underage drinking on the community.
 - The importance of preventative steps for youth.
 - The value of parents discussing the issue with their children.
 - Other steps the community can take to prevent young people from trying alcohol.

Getting Started: Step One

☐ Slide 7

- Decide what kind of Town Hall Meeting to have.
- Determine how large and complex the event should be.
- The following slides offer samples of activities that you can do for various levels of Town Hall Meetings.

Simple Event

☐ Slide 8

- Simple event:
 - Combine the Town Hall Meeting with another community event, such as a PTA meeting or a major school event.
 - Include adults and youth.
 - Hold the event in a school gymnasium or auditorium.
 - Limit the event to an hour or hour and a half.
 - Prepare a media advisory or press release to encourage media coverage.
 - Involve mayors and other public officials, police and health representatives, faith-based organizations, and other representatives.





Complex Event

☐ Slide 9

- Complex event:
 - Make the meeting a separate event, possibly in a hotel ballroom, school auditorium, local library, or a RADAR Network facility.
 - Prepare flyers or mailings to reach out to the entire community.
 - Use the media kit as a guide to help reach out to the media and encourage press coverage.
 - Videotape the meeting for your records or for future use.
 - Involve mayors and other public officials, police and health representatives, faith-based organizations, and other representatives.
 - Offer snacks or light refreshments.
 - Identify and plan meeting followup.
 - Organize a post-meeting reception.

Once you have decided what kind of Town Hall Meeting to host, it's time to begin....

Getting Started: Next Steps

☐ Slide 10

- Identify and enlist people who are motivated to work—and who can make things happen—to be part of your planning committee.
- Form partnerships with local organizations or businesses to increase the visibility of the Town Hall Meeting.
- Meet with the planning committee:
 - Take notes and keep track of the key points during the meeting.
 - Keep a record of everything that is done.
 - Make sure every volunteer has a specific role and assigned tasks.
 - Use the “Getting Started” checklist in the Underage Drinking Prevention: Town Hall Meetings Planning Guide for assistance.

Key Planning Decisions

☐ Slide 11

- Committee members play an important role in ensuring that the Town Hall Meeting runs smoothly. They will work together to decide:
 - When and where the meeting will be held.
 - Who will present and what their focus will be.
 - What type of media coverage will be most effective for the purpose of the meeting.
- Committee members also will decide on:
 - Meeting preparation logistics.
 - Meeting participants.
 - Meeting supplements.
- Use the “Planning Committee” checklist in the Underage Drinking Prevention: Town Hall Meetings Planning Guide for assistance.





Advanced Preparations

☐ Slide 12

- Several items should be considered before the day of the meeting. Each will help keep the focus of the Town Hall Meeting on preventing underage drinking.
 - Choose a moderator to explain the purpose of the meeting.
 - Identify sponsors as well as VIPs and speakers or panelists.
 - Have sign-up sheets for attendees and speakers.
 - Have an agenda that includes the names of the VIPs and sponsors.
 - Determine the amount of time for each speaker's presentation.
 - Decide whether questions to or from the panelists will be allowed.

Advanced Preparations (cont.)

☐ Slide 13

- Obtain signed releases if a photo, audiotape, videotape, or report is used.
- Consider showing a video or film clip on underage alcohol use to generate discussion.
- Determine how to handle any necessary post-meeting cleanup.
- Send out an advisory to the media and make followup calls to ensure that the event will be on their calendars and that they will attend.
- Contact VIPs, speakers, and sponsors to make sure they know the schedule and the length of time they may speak.
- Use the Planning Committee checklists and the media samples in the Underage Drinking Prevention: Town Hall Meetings Planning Guide.

Day-of Activities

☐ Slide 14

- The day of the Town Hall Meeting:
 - Arrive early to make sure the room is set up properly.
 - Greet participants and show them to their seats.
 - Steer media to the reserved section.
 - Start on time and keep the panel moving.

Follow up

☐ Slide 15

- After the Town Hall Meeting:
 - Send out a press release describing the meeting and mentioning speakers and the number of attendees.
 - Make sure to follow up with the media representatives who attended.
 - Write thank-you letters to the VIPs.
 - Develop and distribute a report on the meeting.
 - Follow up with agencies and organizations and get their feedback.





Appendix D: Poster/Flyer





Poster/Flyer

A Town Hall Meeting Preventing Underage Drinking

When: _____
[Date and time]

Where: _____
[Location and address]

Speakers: _____
[Names of guest speakers or panelists]

Sponsored by _____
[Your organization name]

When people hear the phrase “underage drinking,” they often think of teenagers using alcohol. By the time adolescents reach eighth grade, 44 percent have had at least one drink and almost 20 percent report having been “drunk.”

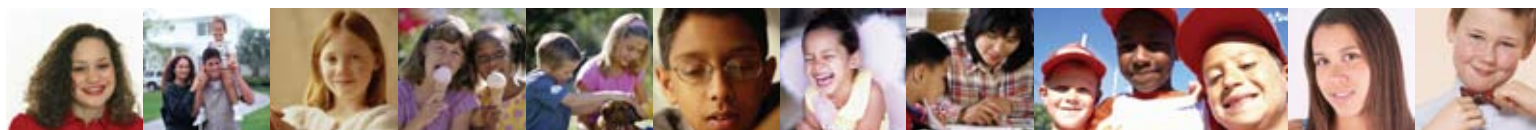
[Insert local statistics]

The prevalence of underage drinking increases with age, making it more important than ever to begin teaching youth at an early age about the dangers of alcohol.

The purpose of the Town Hall Meeting is to increase community awareness on the issue of underage drinking, identify how underage drinking affects the community, and brainstorm possible solutions. The meeting will provide an opportunity for parents, teachers, officials, youth, and other community members to voice their concerns and suggest ideas for preventing young people from using alcohol.

Tentative Agenda *[Revise to meet your needs]*

- Registration.
- Featured Speaker: _____
[Guest speaker name]
- Panelists: _____
[Insert names]
- Questions and Answers.





Underage Drinking Prevention: Town Hall Meetings is a national effort by the Federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, to educate youth, parents, caregivers, and other adults about the harmful effects of underage drinking. The Town Hall Meeting will tie in closely with the Reach Out Now Teach-In, which will be held on _____ at _____ to teach fifth and sixth graders about the risks of underage drinking. [Date and time] [Location]

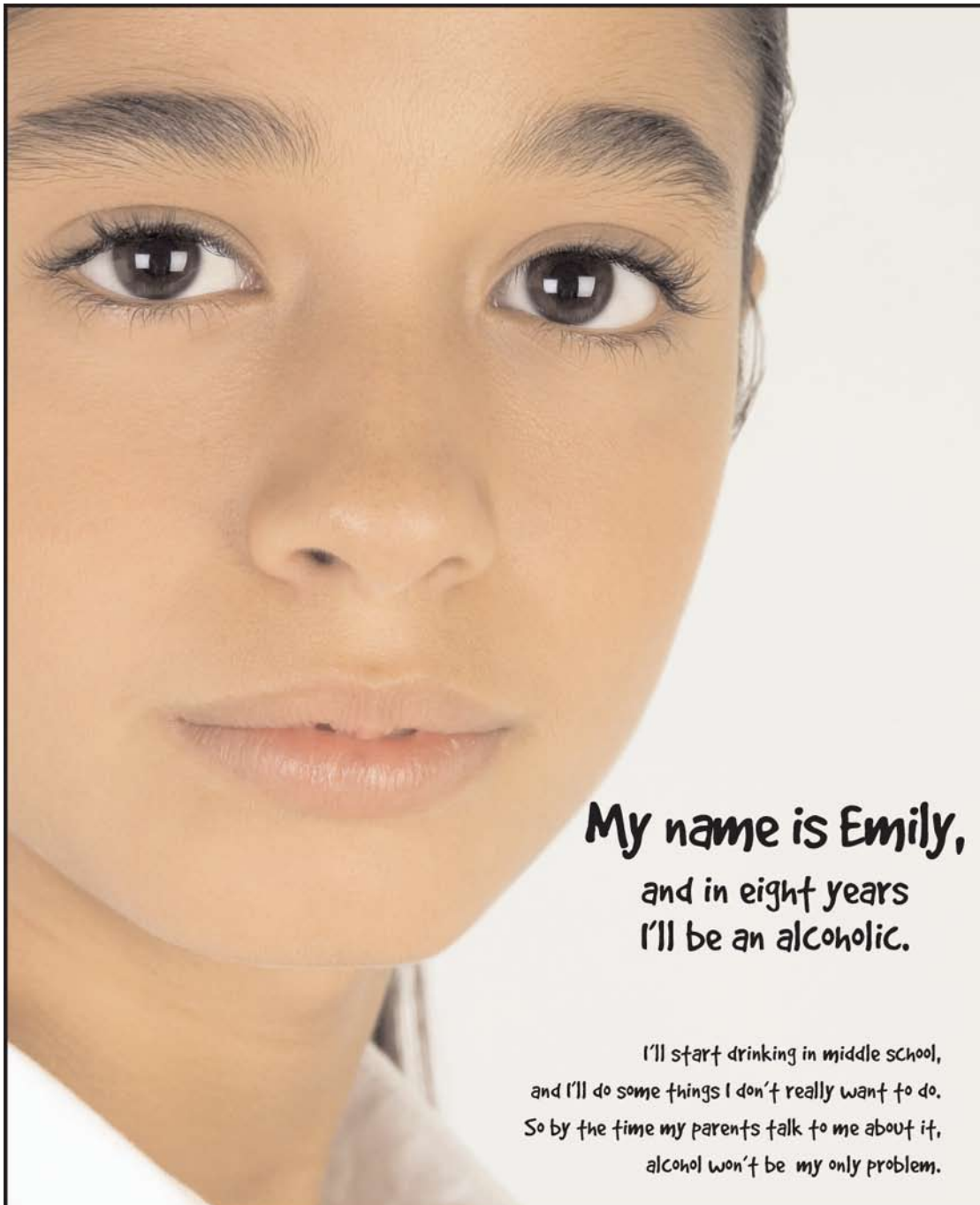
For more information, call _____.
[Your name and phone number]





Appendix E: Start Talking Before They Start Drinking Print PSAs





My name is Emily,
and in eight years
I'll be an alcoholic.

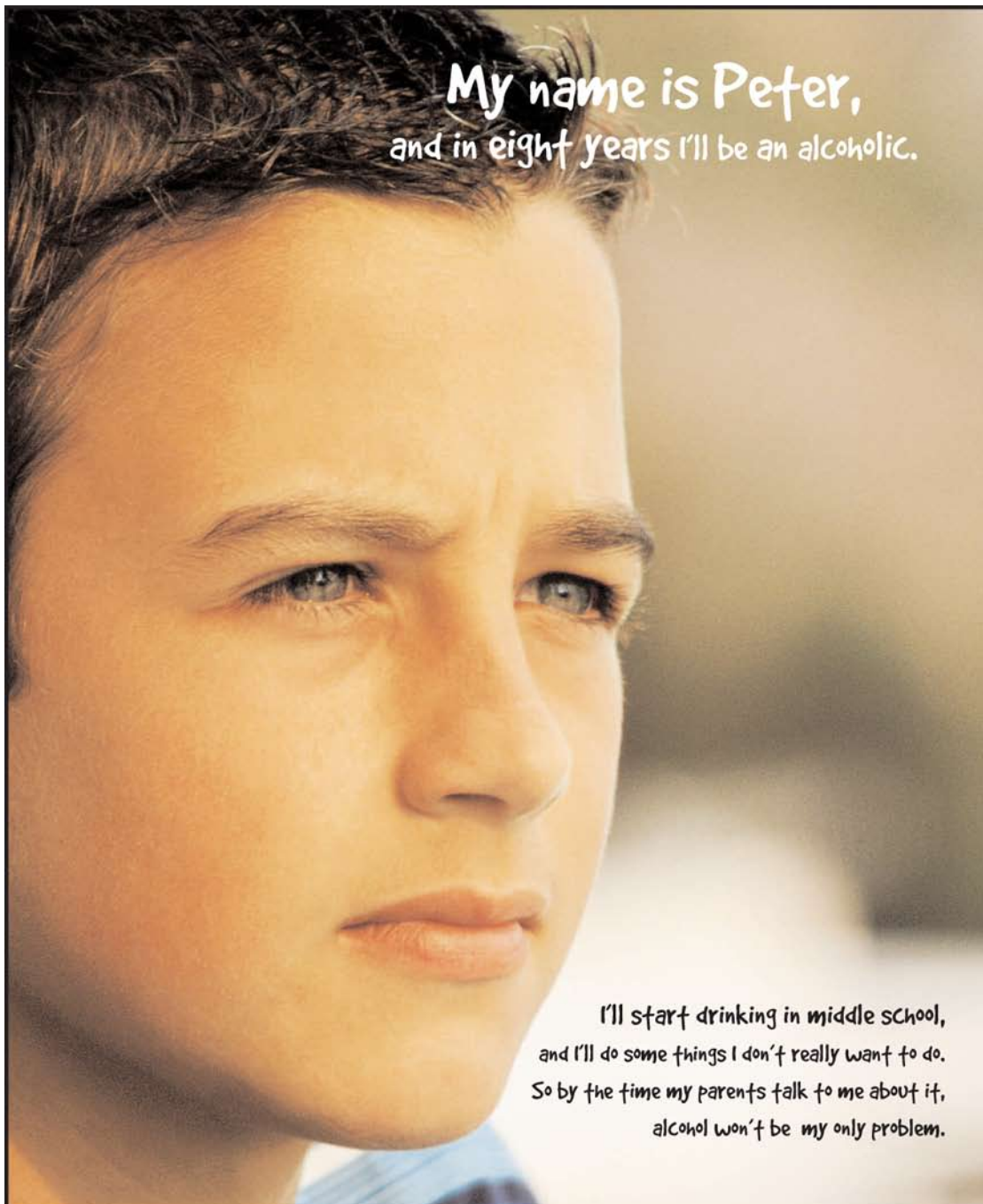
I'll start drinking in middle school,
and I'll do some things I don't really want to do.
So by the time my parents talk to me about it,
alcohol won't be my only problem.

START TALKING BEFORE THEY START DRINKING.

Kids who drink before age 15 are 5 times more likely to have alcohol problems when they're adults. To learn more, go to www.stopalcoholabuse.gov or call 1.800.729.6686

Ad
Council.org





My name is Peter,
and in eight years I'll be an alcoholic.

I'll start drinking in middle school,
and I'll do some things I don't really want to do.
So by the time my parents talk to me about it,
alcohol won't be my only problem.

START TALKING BEFORE THEY START DRINKING.

Kids who drink before age 15 are 5 times more likely to have alcohol problems when they're adults. To learn more, go to www.stopalcoholabuse.gov or call 1.800.729.6686

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